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NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE

PEACE OPERATIONS-PEACEKEEPING VERSUS PEACE ENFORCEMENT:

WHY THE DILEMMA

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CORE COURSE 4 PAPER

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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 1995		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-1995 to 00-00-1995	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Peace Operations-Peacekeeping Versus Peace Enforcement: Why the Dilemma				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National War College, 300 5th Avenue, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC, 20319-6000				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT see report					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 16	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

INTRODUCTION

The dissolution of the former Soviet Union has resulted in new political and military challenges for the United States. Instability and regional threats throughout the world have caused the current administration to change the way this country views its national interests and the strategy to protect those interests. Since the cold war rivalry has evaporated, it can no longer form the basis that ties together U.S. strategy and policy. The post-cold war system is full of unknowns and in many ways is more difficult and misunderstood, not only by the American people and the media, but by policy makers as well.

There is, however, one thing that is no longer an unknown to the American people and to policy makers, and that is the UN and the US will inevitably continue to become more involved in peace operations. In his 1992 report to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) called, "An Agenda for Peace", UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated:

Since the cold war had ended, there will be more opportunities for the UN to create a more peaceful world as was originally envisioned in the UN Charter. After four decades of being "crippled", I am enthusiastic about the enlargement of the role of UN peacekeeping and hope the UN can intervene in conflicts around the world to assist in settling them peacefully.

The stage has been set for increased US involvement as well. Former President Bush stated in a speech to the UN General Assembly in September 1992 that he saw an increased US role in UN efforts. (Bush) He pledged to enhance US participation in peacekeeping activities by providing military planning expertise and facilities for peacekeeping force training. It is evident from President Clinton's actions since taking office that he, too, favors increased opportunities and support for the UN. The key questions for the current administration are, what does peace operations really mean and why is there so much confusion surrounding them?

There are several problems associated with the dynamics surrounding this "umbrella" term called peace operations which is the root cause of the dilemma facing the US and UN. The primary problem revolves around the misuse and misunderstanding of the term peacekeeping which has recently "creeped" into situations that actually require peace enforcement. The purpose of this paper is to examine what the causes are and offer some considerations for how to reduce the problem. Initially, I will provide a brief background assessment from a UN perspective followed by a discussion on the conceptual differences of peacekeeping and peace enforcement which I contend cause greater confusion than the semantical misuse that is so commonly demonstrated by senior policy makers. The paper will then discuss the challenges facing policy makers with regard to US interests and the American people, and what the effects are of a decision to involve US troops in operations that clearly threaten our interests versus ones that do not. The paper will conclude with considerations for some principles that may be useful in determining future US response to UN requests for military assistance.

From both a military and political point of view, the lack of knowledge about peace operations and changing world order has created a dilemma that has caused US decision makers tremendous concern over what role it will play in the world arena, specifically when and what type of conflicts US troops will get involved in. To date, there has been virtually no criteria or framework for deciding this. Instead, both the UN and the US have considered situations on a case by case basis almost to the point of ad-hocracy, and since the Gulf war have supported two separate operations in Iraq plus ones in Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Haiti just to name a few.

BACKGROUND: UNITED NATIONS PERSPECTIVE

It is an accepted fact that the UN has assumed a more active role in resolving regional conflicts. Many of the recent operations have been greater in scope and complexity than in the past, and it appears that their nature is changing from peacekeeping to peace enforcing. While Washington has officially pledged support for a stronger and more forceful UN, there are growing concerns and challenges that can make what seems rather simple actually very difficult.

Since most US participation in peace operations is under the control of the UN, it should be noted that the UN Charter was written in 1945, well before the term peacekeeping and peace enforcement became popular. Neither term specifically appears anywhere in the charter. It is no surprise that there are different interpretations amongst the member states of the UN concerning the implications of the terms. An example of ambiguity in the Charter appears in Article 2, Paragraph 7 where it can be interpreted to preclude Blue Helmet intervention in purely intrastate contingencies such as Columbia. (Blodgett 207)

Nothing contained in the present charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter, but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII

For the most part, Chapter VI, Article 33 contains the words that most people agree support peacekeeping operations. It obligates the parties in a dispute to "seek a solution by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice" (UN Charter). Chapter VII Articles 41 through 45 empower member states to impose sanctions and says

the UNSC may take actions by forces as appropriate to restore peace and security if all other non-military measures have been exhausted. The flavor of Chapter VII is warlike and in essence provides international legal authority for military action to force a change in behavior. (Hunt 78)

There is not as clear an agreement that Chapter VII captures for peace enforcement operations what Chapter VI does for peacekeeping which adds to the dilemma of deciding what operation the US should get involved in. One writer summed it up by saying peace enforcement falls in the middle and should be "Chapter VI and a half" (Hunt.78) Going back to the point of semantics, which are indeed important, it must be realized they are also limited, and different people and organizations apply their own meaning to things which are not extremely clear

The most important aspect in achieving success in any military operation is to have a well defined mission with specific objectives. This becomes more difficult when put in a geo-strategic context since most peace operations occur outside of US borders, particularly where there is worldwide media attention. Therefore, everyone involved at all levels must understand the role they play, regardless of rank or position. This is much more than knowing the Rules of Engagement (ROE). A decision made at the tactical level can have strategic and/or political implications.

UN sponsored peace operations are no different, except that before a mission can be determined there must be a UNSC resolution authorizing and defining a mandate. Mandates are developed by politicians and diplomats during the negotiation phase prior to a peace operation. They are mostly a collection of compromises developed to ensure success.

however they are often filled with ambiguities. What this amounts to is a commander in the field with an unworkable plan. An example of this was iterated by Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Hoar (ret), the former commander-in-chief of the US Central Command, while addressing a group of defense industry leaders. In explaining that civilian leadership still does not have a clear understanding of the peacekeeping mission, he cited the first draft of the Somalia operations plan as an example. "The first cut on the Somalia plan said 'disarm all of Somalia'" He went on to say "we got that out of the plan because it was not possible" (McKenzie). He was referring to the operations plan drafted by civilian leadership in the UN.

This proved to be a major problem in the 1991 operation in Cambodia. "Each faction quickly realized that it was possible to interpret the Paris agreement in ways that suited it best. The Khmer Rouge consistently justified their refusal to cooperate on the basis that UNTAC was not fulfilling its promise of insuring the departure of "foreign forces" from Cambodia. A major issue was their different interpretation of the term "foreign forces" (Farris 47). One writer summed up the effects of this by saying, "an ambiguous or incomplete mandate can indeed make a straightforward mission difficult, or a difficult mission impossible, but the clearest mandate in the world cannot make an impossible mission more doable" (Blechman.39).

As John Ruggie, Dean of the School of International and Public Relations at Columbia, says, "the growing misuse of peacekeeping missions does more than strain the UN materially and institutionally. It has brought the world body to the point of outright strategic failure- indeed, in Bosnia the line has been crossed already. UN peacekeeping forces there have performed a valuable humanitarian role but having been deployed in a security environment

for which the peacekeeping mechanism was not designed" (Lewis 2)

PEACEKEEPING VERSES PEACE ENFORCEMENT: THE MISUNDERSTANDING

Peace operations is a comprehensive term that is used very loosely by academics and military personnel as well as by the media to cover a myriad of operations, almost to the point of becoming the prominent feature of the post-Cold War efforts to suppress international violence. Regardless of the size and type of future US involvement in UN operations, there is a need to address peacekeeping and peace enforcement in more detail in order to better understand the conceptual differences.

For the purpose of this paper, I will use the definitions found in Army Field Manual 100-23 entitled Peace Operations as a baseline for the discussion. Peacekeeping is defined as "military or paramilitary operations that are undertaken with the concern of all major belligerents, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce and support diplomatic efforts to reach long-term political settlement" (FM 100-23 112). A classic example of a true peacekeeping operation is the multinational force and observers operation (MFO) in the Sinai. FM 100-23 defines peace enforcement as "the application of military force or threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization to compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace and order". The UN Force in Cyprus provides a good example of a peace enforcement mission. There, the UN force sector commanders had to physically place themselves and their units between armed irregular Cypriot Greek and Turkish forces to prevent the spark that might have destroyed the shaky peace (FM 100-23 6).

US policy classifies both as types of peace operations and it clearly distinguishes

between the two. However, many people don't understand the difference and seem to think there is a continuum that these operations fall along and can be moved up and down depending on the situation. That is not true. The forces used for an enforcement operation are not suitable for transition to a peacekeeping force because they are not perceived to be neutral. An example typical of many writers being uninformed appeared in the New York Times recently. The article was discussing the change of command in Bosnia and stated that "Gen Smith will command a peacekeeping force with the goal of ending the Bosnian War". (Cohen) That, quite obviously, far exceeds a mission for a lightly armed peacekeeping force.

The real key to differentiating between peacekeeping and peace enforcement is the implication to use force, even though a shot may never be fired. Peacekeeping is synonymous with truce-keeping and is only an interim measure to put a stop to violence, usually for an unspecified period of time. Success is based on both a willingness of all disputing parties to abide by the truce and on the ability of the peacekeeping force itself to maintain strict neutrality toward both sides. (Allen 56) A successful peacekeeping operation is dependent on a larger political process, and military operations are in a distinctly more supporting role. In fact, the military may have very little positive effect on the outcome.

Peace enforcement by nature is totally different in that it is a form of armed intervention. A peace enforcement force is not perceived to be neutral, and its license is an international mandate. "Types of peace enforcement operations can range from enforcement of sanctions to high-intensity warfare, and include protection of human rights, humanitarian relief efforts, guaranteeing freedom of movement or separation of warring parties or factions involuntarily" (Allen 58)

A successful peace enforcement operation could be defined as either the threat or actual use of a force to achieve coalition goals where the hostile situation would be terminated under terms favorable to the coalition partners and faithful to the international mandate of resolutions. Desert Storm is the ideal example of a successful enforcement operation based on the original mandate.

The 1983 attack on the Marine command post in Lebanon serves as a perfect case study of how the misunderstanding of a particular mission can turn into disaster. This tragic example where policy makers failed to understand the conceptual difference in the types of operations cost the US 200 Marine lives when a Marine command post became an attractive target for a group of factions who attacked it with a truck bomb. This occurred several weeks after a successful peacekeeping operation had already occurred where US Marines had helped facilitate the withdrawal of Palestine Liberation Army and Israeli forces under the terms of an international agreement. The operation had the consent of all concerned and the mission was very successful.

The tragedy occurred two weeks later when the Marines were again called upon to go ashore to assist the Lebanon government in controlling growing internal disorder. Only this time the Marines did not have the consent of all belligerents, and "unwittingly became a party to the conflict through de facto alliance with the government" (Hunt 77). It appears the Marines were disposed in a manner consistent with consensual peacekeeping but inappropriate for participants in a conflict. The failure of the mission can be attributed in large measure to violations of the peacekeeping principles of impartiality and noncoercion. The mission demonstrated what happens when a force is perceived to be taking sides: it loses its

legitimacy and credibility as a trustworthy third party, thereby prejudicing its security (Berdal 44)

Policy makers must be explicit in setting objectives and envisioning actions appropriate to those objectives. The decision must be made between peacekeeping or peace enforcement, either where the mission requires impartiality and noncoercion or support to one or the other parties through political or military assistance. But, it can't be both simultaneously. If the objectives change in a rapidly developing situation, the policy makers should notice it soon enough to make the correct call.

US NATIONAL INTERESTS: A CONSIDERATION

For as long as the US has been faced with the decision of intervening militarily in any type of conflict, the dilemma of whether US interests are threatened has been an item of debate to policy makers and to the American public. Moreover, and rightfully so, US public opinion has played a major role on the decision. When national interest are clearly at stake as they were in the Persian Gulf region, the decision is fairly easy. However, in most recent cases, that has not been the case.

Two indices that highlight the struggle to define US national interests in international conflicts are the actual willingness of American decision makers to commit forces in conflicts abroad, and US public expression of support for those decisions.

Somalia is a case in point where there was no real threat to any US interest. President Bush's decision to send troops there was generally accepted as a humanitarian mission which does not fall specifically into either peacekeeping or peace enforcement. The subsequent decision to withdraw US troops from Somalia after the highly publicized casualties is

indicative of the tenuousness of purpose and commitment which accompany military intervention when overt threats to US interests are not present. After the killing of 18 US rangers, the most important goal quickly changed from humanitarian support to bringing American troops home as quickly as possible.

The inability of US decision makers to sort out the complexities of the peacekeeping mission in Lebanon in 1983, and the lack of discernable progress in achieving the ambiguous goal of remaking the warring internal factors into a viable government left the American people far less supportive of the dispatch of US Marines to Beirut. On the other hand, both the operations in Grenada (1983) and Panama (1989) were popular with the American public because they quickly proved successful. This demonstrates that fewer people oppose a policy once it proves successful than if the outcome remains uncertain for longer periods of time.

The dilemma over peace operations, to include when and where the US should get involved, is certain to remain high on the scope of concern to policy makers. Sen Robert Dole (R-Kan) has introduced legislation to place limitations on US participation in UN peace operations and to insure a Congressional role in any decision to dispatch US troops overseas. Despite this, it is safe to assume that future US involvement is a certainty. If that is true, careful consideration should be given to whether US interests are threatened. If the recent pattern holds, only rarely will national interests be sufficiently at stake to warrant resolution through the use of force. By the same token, as the world's only remaining superpower, the US should continue to be ready to assist in ways other than militarily. At the same time, the US must stand up and issue a "no" response to the UN's call for assistance when its interests are not at stake. The US can not afford to become the world's policeman.

PRINCIPLES FOR CONSIDERATION: A BIPARTISAN GOAL

If the effectiveness of UN peace operations are to be enhanced over the long term, US policy makers must agree on the best way for the US to contribute. The age old debate between the executive and legislative branches will go on forever, however the debate should be over principles, not down in the weeds issues. The goal should be nothing less than bipartisan, executive-legislative consensus that produces clarity rather than a continuance of discussion that proliferates the clouds already hanging over the misunderstood term called peace operations. I offer the following thoughts for consideration.

0 First, and foremost, the misunderstanding which causes the misuse of the terminology must be cleared up. The public, to include the media, must become aware that peace operations is a broad term. The difference between peacekeeping and peace enforcement is more than semantics, particularly in terms of what it means to the military forces who are called upon to carry out such missions. Forces deployed for peacekeeping duties must be appropriately structured and guided, which means that both parties have agreed to a cease-fire, as well as the acceptance of a neutral, lightly armed force to ensure compliance. On the other hand, if the mission calls for something beyond peacekeeping, then the UN must recognize that when preparing the mandate. Once policy makers (US and UN) and the American public are better educated on the difference in terminology, they will be more likely to support US intervention in UN operations.

0 The UNSC must take immediate steps to change the wording of the UN Charter so that it can be used effectively in the international system. Chapters VI and VII would be a good starting point for the US military to have greater legitimacy. The past record of

involvement through ad-hocracy might then improve. Once the decision is made for US intervention, there has got to be a rational, coherent political and military strategy developed. The mandate must set forth clear and specific actions and goals for the peace operation. Regardless of the situation, before US forces are dispatched to any troubled location, a credible coalition force under the command of US leadership should be required.

0 The ad-hoc arrangements in the UN Secretariat should be converted to a more permanent one for contingency planning and logistics. This would enhance US participation in the planning process. Given the increase in the amount of security council decisions involving military activities since the end of the cold-war, the need of some type of fixed military staff in the secretariat has become more clear. In 1993, Ambassador Albright reinforced the need while describing the weakness and lack of command structure in the UN by saying "the programmed amateurism of the UN, near total absence of contingency planning, lack of centralized command and control, and lift arrangements cobbled together on a wing and a prayer" (Lewis 22)

0 US national interests should always be the first question considered before accepting a UN request for assistance. As National Security Advisor Anthony Lake stated in 1993, "there is one overriding factor for determining whether the US should act multilaterally, and that is America's interest. The rule is simple, we should act where doing so advances our interests and we should shun multilateral action where it does not serve our interest" (Aspin 66). This is not to say that a regional conflict that does not pose a direct threat to vital interests should be ignored. There are certainly those types of conflicts that warrant non-US military involvement such as assisting with funding and expertise in strengthening the

planning and management processes of the UN. The challenge is in deciding which kinds and amounts of sacrifices the US is willing to accept on behalf of some less than vital interest threat. This is where the US has failed in the past. US public support for involvement in peace operations will always be low in situations where national interests cannot be translated into some concrete policy, especially where percentages are high that US lives will be lost. The question that must be answered by policy makers is whether or not stakes or interests about to be committed are worth the risk to American participants.

CONCLUSION

American involvement in peace operations has grown dramatically in the past few years. Peace operations are politically well suited for the US and can be expected to continue, however the question of US involvement in UN peace operations remains complex. The US would like to be able to rely more heavily on the UN to legitimize US intervention in regional conflicts. Unfortunately, and to some degree ironically, the UN is currently not effective in resolving crisis situations without US leadership and assistance.

I do not believe that either civilian or military leaders have fully explored the kinds of situations in which peacekeeping or peace enforcement would best be used. They are definitely not in agreement on what constitutes US national interest, or at least what the legitimate threats are to those interests. Consideration of the principles discussed in this paper will not resolve all of the factors that contribute to the dilemma facing policy makers on US participation in peace operations. They will, however get the US and the UN oriented in the right direction in an effort to tighten the gap that currently plagues this debate.

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